



February 24, 2009

The members of the Public Safety and Security Committee:

Testimony in support of:

Raised Bill No. 908 AN ACT CONCERNING OFFENSES AGAINST POLICE CANINES AND VOLUNTEER CANINE SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAMS (LCO No. 3202)

The Connecticut Council of Police Union supports *Raised Bill No. 908*. Recent events have shown that persons bent on creating havoc will stop at nothing in harming persons of authority in the performance of their duties. These situations have been found to be increasingly dangerous in that attacks on authority, including police canines have become more prevalent.

A recent situation in Connecticut wherein police officers responding to a report of a violent domestic fight resulted in a police canine being stabbed repeatedly with a knife by a suspect involved in the assault. The suspect then turned to the police officers with the knife.

We feel that if the penalties that currently exist regarding cruelty to animals do not discourage this type of crime, penalties should be increased to properly address the intentional acts of interfering with police and police canines in the performance of their duties.

We ask that you vote *Raised Bill No. 908* out of Committee.

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From the **Hartford Courant**

East Hartford Officer, Police Canine Still Treated For Wounds

By CHRISTINE DEMPSEY | The **Hartford Courant**
1:50 PM CST, **January 14, 2009**

EAST HARTFORD - A **police** officer who was shot in the leg during a weekend confrontation that killed a **Hartford** man remains hospitalized, **police** said today.

Officer Todd Mona was being treated at St. Francis Hospital and Medical Center in **Hartford**, said Hugo Benettieri, public information officer for the **East Hartford police**. Mona faces a lengthy recovery, Benettieri said.

Benettieri would not say exactly where on Mona's leg he was shot, or how many times Taurean Wilson, 26, of **Hartford**, was shot. Wilson was transported to **Hartford Hospital**, where he was pronounced dead.

Officers responding to a call about a violent domestic fight on Woodlawn Circle late Saturday encountered a man armed with a knife. The man, who **police** later identified as Wilson, refused to put the knife down, prompting Mona to unleash his **police** **dog**, **police** said.

Wilson stabbed **police** several times, **police** said, then continued toward officers with the knife. He then was shot, **police** said.

Benettieri said there were at least two officers present at the time of the shooting, but would not be more specific. Lt. J. Paul Vance of the state **police**, which is investigating the fatal shooting, also would not comment.

"That will be in the report," Vance said Tuesday when asked how many times Wilson was shot. "We don't want to piecemeal the investigation."

He said ballistic tests will help **police** determine how Mona was shot.

"We think we know what happened. But we don't want to be premature," Vance said.

The shooting happened in "very close quarters," Benettieri said, and during a "very hectic, frantic situation."

Meanwhile, Benettieri said **police** "has attained celebrity status" at the Bolton Veterinary Hospital. The staff is giving him a lot of attention, he said, and he is the subject of many inquiries from the public.

"Luckily, none of the [dog's] organs were hit," he said.